

Front door discipline cited as one back door solution

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Many Southern Baptist churches lose nearly as many members through the back door of inactivity as walk in the front door.

Roy Edgemont, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department, cited the problem and said new Christians become inactive when they are not helped to understand their faith and to become involved in the programs.

He termed many churches' failure to be as aggressive in helping new Christians grow in their faith as they are in winning people to Christ "the scandal of the Christian church of this century."

"We are morally responsible for new converts," said Edgemont. He likened not helping them understand what Christianity is about to "throwing a new baby into the world without a value system or principles for living."

Statistically, it appears that almost two-thirds of those baptized in Southern Baptist churches in 1980 were left to fend for themselves. While 429,742 persons were baptized, only 151,823 participated in any form of training for new church members, according to the Uniform Church Letter.

"We are bringing people in but are failing them in three areas," said Edgemont. "We are not teaching them who they are in God's family, helping them discover their

spiritual gifts or helping them find their place of responsibility and ministry through the local church."

First Baptist Church, Kingston, Tenn., and North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, Ariz., are among a growing number of churches experimenting with programs to activate inactive members.

"Front door discipline" is how Gary Marsh, pastor of First, Kingston, describes his congregation's efforts. The church sets high demands and is considering steps which will lead to a stronger emphasis on new members attending training sessions on the meaning of salvation, understanding the "Baptist Faith and Message" statement and seeing their responsibilities for ministry through the local church.

The church also has initiated a one-year deacons' associates program. Young adult men work with active deacons and are expected to meet the biblical qualifications of deacons, attend Sunday and Wednesday activities with their families and be tithe or be working on a systematic program of giving. Marsh said 23 men have agreed to participate in the programs for 1981-82.

"With 20 active deacons and 23 associates, we have reduced each person's load from 32 to 15 families in the deacon family ministry program," said Marsh. This will

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"Back door problem" is how some church leaders describe their growing concern about increasing numbers of inactive members.

Brotherhood consolidates organizational structure

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Trustees meeting here reduced the organizational structure of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and named three area directors.

The new organizational structure calls for three service areas: Brotherhood program, support, and business. Former divisions of Royal Ambassadors and Baptist Men's work were incorporated into Brotherhood program services.

Trustees okayed the recommendation of Executive Director James H.

Success was only a bike ride away

By Robert O'Brien

CHONGWE, Zambia (BP)—Dave Parker's willingness to squelch his skepticism and spend \$12.03 to repair a bicycle could go down as one of the most cost effective decisions in the history of Southern Baptist missions.

Earlier this year, a Zambian layman offered to visit and preach in some villages near Chongwe, Zambia, if Parker, a Southern Baptist missionary from Georgia, would agree to repair the man's bike.

"I thought I'd heard that old story before," Parker recalled, "but I felt that the Lord would have me help him with this."

Even though skeptical, Parker got the bike fixed, and the layman, true to his word, hit the road.

Four months passed. During that time, the layman visited and began fellowship groups and preaching points in six different places only a bike ride away from his home. The missionaries soon conducted training sessions for leaders developing in new churches which resulted from the man's efforts.

"What the Lord can do with a \$12.03 repair job and a willing layman—even when we're skeptical," Parker exclaimed.

(O'Brien writes for the Foreign Mission Board.)

Cothen picked as NOBTS VP

Joe H. Cothen has been elected by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees as vice-president for Academic Affairs at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Cothen will fill the position to be vacated by J. Harder Kennedy December 31.

Cothen is serving as chairman of the division of pastoral

ministries at New Orleans Seminary. He has served on the faculty since 1968 when he was elected associate professor of communication arts in the Division of Religious Education. Cothen was pastor at Oak Park Baptist Church, New Orleans, from 1971-77 before returning to the seminary as associate professor of pastoral work. He later was elevated to a full professorship before becoming division chairman.

Cothen, 55, was born in Poplarville, Miss. Following naval service, 1944-46, he was graduated from Mississippi College. He received the bachelor of divinity degree in 1952 and the doctor of theology degree in 1955 from New Orleans Seminary. He later received a master of arts degree from the University of Southern Mississippi.

He is married to the former Hazel Moulder (daughter of the Chester S. Moulder) of Hattiesburg. The Cothens have three children—two sons, Jodie and Nathan, and one daughter, Cynthia. He is a brother of Grady C. Cothen, president of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Cothen has served churches in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi—among them First Baptist Church, Thomasville, Alabama (1956-1958), and Alta Woods Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss. (1958-1968); New Orleans (1971-1977).

Smith to name Norman Godfrey, associate executive director, as director of Brotherhood programs and services; Jack Childs, director of the marketing department, as director of support services; and Lynette Oliver, business director, will lead business services.

Brotherhood program services include Baptist Men, Pioneers, Crusaders, associational Brotherhood, Brotherhood administration and general editorial services.

Within support services are public relations and marketing, graphic, merchandise and periodical services. Business services includes accounting, comptroller's office and building maintenance.

In other action trustees declined to adopt a charter and bylaws setting up a national fellowship of Baptist men. They did establish a committee to determine ways of involving men in Southern Baptist activities.

The committee, composed of trustees

(Continued on page 3)

Consensus on missions is "exciting"

By Ron L. Surber

Missions first-hand is exciting! That is the consensus from the seven men who traveled to Guadeloupe, French West Indies, from Hattiesburg's Temple Baptist Church for a week-long, construction-centered mission trip.

The men were requested to accomplish two major goals. The church in Pointe-A-Pitre needed a complete new roof on the existing building, and part of the back courtyard needed to be covered for additional education space.

The old tin roof was first removed from the auditorium, additional bracing was installed, and a new tin roof was put into place and painted. One job down, but the next was tougher.

The courtyard cover was to be approximately 20 feet by 30 feet. Concrete had to be broken into for placement of nine support poles. These were tied together with framework for the roof which was then installed. This new construction nearly doubled the size of usable space for church activities.

Wayne and Florence Frederick, missionaries (from Mississippi) at Pointe-A-Pitre, directed the work as well as providing meals, transportation, and lodging. One of the most valuable times the men experienced was when Wayne Frederick explained how the Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering provided the resources for missions.

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Jackson gathering is Nov. 9-11

'Jesus is Lord' is Mississippi Baptist Convention theme

"Jesus is Lord," is the theme of the 146th annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention set for Nov. 9-11 at First Baptist Church, Jackson. The theme is taken from Philippians 2:9-11.

This, the annual business meeting for the nearly 2,000 participating churches in the state convention, begins at 1:20 p.m., Nov. 9. During that first session there will be the President's address by Brooks Wester, pastor of First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg. Special music will be by "New

light", the Baptist Student Union choir of Jones Junior College, and by the FBC, Hattiesburg, choir.

Fisher Humphreys, professor of theology at New Orleans Seminary, will begin his series of Bible studies that session and will continue them throughout the entire convention, one each session.

The 1982 convention budget will be presented during the first session for vote the next morning. And the first of six "Family Living" presentations will be made. The first will be by Troy Brand, Jr. Annette Hitt will give the second one; Gerald Hasselman, the third; Jo Holloman, the fourth; Ron Cassaday, fifth; and Eugene Roberts, sixth.

Each session will have a different music leader. The first will be James Hayes. The second will be Don Bennett. The third, Johnny Speedling, Jr.; the fourth, Donn Kenyon; fifth, Lamar Self; and sixth, Lester Mason.

The Monday evening session will feature the state convention program, led by Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Special music will be by the Singing Churchoom, and their handbell group.

Following the Monday night session, there will be a reception at the Baptist Building (across the street from the church) honoring home and foreign missionaries attending the convention.

The third session begins at 8:50, Tuesday morning, Nov. 10, with special features including election of the convention president, presentation of resolutions, adoption of the budget, and a message from Russell Dilday.

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Children taunted for religion class protest

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON—Michael and Julie Budde, Roman Catholics, sued the Adair, Okla., school board for permitting two women to engage in systematic religious instruction of children during school hours and in the classrooms of Adair Elementary School.

School board officials have acknowledged that the practice has gone on unprotested for the last 38 years.

The Buddes took the school board, Superintendent of Schools Noel Winfield and Adair Elementary School Principal Robert Boyd to court after their two daughters, a fourth grader and a first grader, were harassed by classmates because of their parents' objections to the practice. According to the Buddes' attorney, Greg Bledsoe of Tulsa, the children were taunted as "anti-Christian" and "communist."

Local pressure against the family became so intense, he said, that the Buddes removed their children from the school and placed them in a public school in nearby Claremore, where Michael Budde works.

In Washington, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs General Counsel John W. Baker said he agrees with the Buddes' action, noting that "all major denominations—including

the Southern Baptist Convention—have formally endorsed" the 1962 and 1963 Supreme Court decisions outlawing state-required and state-sponsored religious exercises in public schools.

Baker also said the Adair controversy is "disappointing" in that injured Roman Catholic parents had to bring the suit. "Baptists, Methodists and others should have taken the lead," he declared, instead of joining those who are "disparaging the efforts of concerned Roman Catholic parents who have spoken out for a proper separation of church and state."

Noting that Baptists are strong in Oklahoma, Baker went on to declare: "We Baptists in particular should remember that our denominational forebears, fighting seemingly insurmountable odds as a tiny, persecuted, minority sect, helped forge the religion guarantees in the First Amendment. The fact that in many communities today Baptists may be in a majority does not mean we have a right to impose our views on present-day religious minorities."

He added: "We must ask ourselves if we would tolerate the kind of religious instruction being done in Adair if the teachers were Mormons or Black Muslims or Jews."

Attorney Bledsoe, who was reared a Southern Baptist, told Baptist Press that the Buddes' suit seeks temporary and permanent injunctions forbidding the religious instruction, as well as \$60,000 in compensatory and \$250,000 in punitive damages. The first hearing in the case will come Nov. 12 at the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma in Tulsa, when the request for a temporary injunction will be heard.

When the case comes to trial, probably after Jan. 1, 1982, the Buddes will challenge the arrangement between Adair school officials and the religious instructors on both federal and state constitutional grounds. Bledsoe said the Oklahoma Constitution has even more specific prohibitions against using the public schools for religious teaching than does the federal constitution.

Baker said if the Buddes' case eventually comes to the U.S. Supreme Court, his agency and other national religious bodies "will in all likelihood" join the Buddes as friends of the court "against the unconstitutional practice their young daughters encountered in the Adair Elementary School."

(Haste writes for the Baptist Joint Committee.)

Special music will be by Johnny Speedling, Jr., and by the men's quartet of First Baptist church, Laurel.

This third session also begins the series of convention agency reports, which continue throughout the rest of the convention.

The fourth session, beginning at 1:50 Tuesday afternoon, includes a sermon by Winfield Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church, Amarillo, Tex., and election of the rest of the convention officers. Special music will be by the Donn Kenyon Singers.

The Tuesday evening session, starting at 6:50 p.m., offers the convention sermon by Jim Yates, pastor of First Baptist Church, Yazoo City. That church's sanctuary choir will offer special music.

The sixth and concluding session begins the next morning at 8:50. It features messages by Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the Woman's Missionary Union, Southern Baptist Convention, and by James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist

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South American missions is Monday evening focus

South America will speak of their experiences. Perry and Mary Sanderford, a couple from Pinelake Baptist Church in Rankin Association, worked with the Uruguayan mission and New Dawn Baptist Church of Montevideo and with the Burzaco Baptist Church of Buenos Aires for two weeks in June and July. Last month Maurice Flowers, director of missions for Jones Association, worked with the church at Carmelo, Uruguay, and visited Argentina. In Uruguay he conducted a witness training school.

Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will be in charge of the session and will deliver the closing address that will call attention to the place of the Partnership endeavor in the Bold Mission efforts of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Singing Churchoom of Mississippi will participate in the program, and the congregation will be asked to join in on two songs to be sung in Spanish. A phonetic arrangement of the words to the songs will be printed in the program for the evening.

State averages \$1 million per month in '81 gifts

The sixth month during 1981 for more than \$1 million in Cooperative Program gifts to be received from Mississippi Baptist churches brought the 10-month total to \$10,364,559 following October gifts of \$1,063,380.

October was the second month in a row for receipts to go above \$1 million. Receipts in September were the highest on record for one month and amounted to \$1,236,857. The pro rata budget for one month of the \$12,655,000 annual budget is \$1,054,583. Thus both September and October receipts were above the monthly budget figure. This brought the pro rata budget deficit for

the 10-month period from the \$210,071 following September to \$181,274 at the end of October.

The October gifts were \$62,292 above those of the same month of last year, according to Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. For the year-to-date the total gifts are \$721,196 above those of the same period of last year.

Kelly pointed out that unless churches send in their gifts for November early, this month may not show a good report in that the month

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Seminary, Mexican Bible Institute merger okayed

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here voted to merge with the Mexican Baptist Bible Institute in San Antonio.

The action, which came during the trustees' annual fall meeting Oct. 19-21, provides for Southwestern to assume control and ownership of the Institute from the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The proposal must be approved by two consecutive annual meetings of the BGCT. The first vote will be taken during the convention's annual meeting Oct. 27-29 in Waco.

Plans for transfer of control and operation will begin immediately, according to officials of both institutions. Official control would come following an affirmative vote at the 1982 BGCT meeting in Corpus Christi.

Under the new arrangement, the San Antonio school will be known as Hispanic Baptist Theological Semi-

nary. Major emphasis will be in training Hispanic ministers in noncredit diploma, associate degree and master's degree programs.

Instructors in accredited programs would be adjunctive teachers on the Southwestern faculty and would be elected by Southwestern's trustees.

Trustees of Southwestern will be the governing body for the Hispanic seminary. An executive council nominated by trustees would serve as the liaison between the school and the entire board.

Daniel J. Rivera, MBBI president, would continue as chief administrative officer of the new seminary.

In other action trustees named J. W. MacGorman, a member of the Southwestern faculty since 1948, as the first Wesley Harrison Professor of New Testament. The professorship honors the late Wesley Harrison of Seymour, Texas, a long-time seminary benefactor.

Mission in Context ends with strategy emphasis

By Jim Newton

RIDGECREST, N. C. (BP)—After taking a long hard look at 1980 census data and Bold Mission Thrust plans for the denomination, more than 940 associational, state and national Southern Baptist leaders began to struggle with developing mission strategy on the associational level.

Mission in Context, described as a "once-a-decade" national conference for associational directors of missions, ended with pleas from the director of missions for Atlanta Baptist Association and the president of the SBC Home Mission Board urging a new role for the association as a base for mission strategy.

"The association is being called forth to a different kind of mission," said Eddie Gilstrap, director of missions in Atlanta. "We must become mission strategists where we are."

The Baptist association is best equipped to plan mission strategy because it is the closest organizational unit to the local church, Gilstrap insisted. The association must be a full partner in the denomination in planning mission strategy, rather than simply being a "conduit" through which state and national Baptist bodies channel their plans, programs and strategies.

In the final message of the three-day conference at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, Home Mission Board President William G. Tanner urged the associational leaders to plan their own strategy in the context not only of their own association, but in the context of the whole world.

"There is a danger, I fear, of a creeping neo-isolationism, 'a-me-ism' in America as we tend to turn inward and look more at our own personal concerns, rather than looking at the whole world Christ died to redeem," Tanner said.

"We must not forget . . . the whole world today is a global village," Tanner said: "What you do today in Littlefield, Texas, can have an immediate effect in Ouagadougou, Upper Volta."

Tanner also warned that Baptist

mission strategy must be planned within the context of the whole religious world: "We'd better not forget that God works through his whole body (the church), not just through one of his little fingers called Southern Baptists."

In a closing evaluation, the chairman of the Mission in Context steering committee, James Nelson of the Home Mission Board's associational missions division, observed the facts and data from the census report compared to Baptist church growth have been "rather pessimistic."

"But as redeemed people of God, we go with our theology. In Jesus Christ, we leave with a positive note."

During a presentation of data from the 1980 census, Home Mission Board research division director Orrin D. Morris said the data indicates Southern Baptists will lose the South and the cities if they do not focus more on reaching blacks and ethnics.

Morris pointed out Baptist church membership did not keep pace with the population growth in the South where Southern Baptists are strongest between 1970-80, and predicted reaching the large cities of the South will present the most formidable challenge to Baptists in the decade of the 1980s.

In another major address, Southern Seminary President Duke K. McCall said the most crucial question Southern Baptists are facing is, "how much diversity can Southern Baptists tolerate?"

"We may splinter Southern Baptists because of our intolerance of diversity that God created in the first place," McCall said.

He added, however, that "God isn't listening to our predictions. The Holy Spirit has moved in the face of all the trends, winning people to Jesus Christ. He is going to continue until the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of God."

An entire day during the conference was spent in workshops and presentations introducing detailed Bold Mission Thrust plans for the SBC for 1982-85, including nine projects under three priorities: "Reach People, Develop Believers, Strengthen Families."

management consulting service with offices in Memphis, declined to discuss the lawsuit, and said the reorganization "didn't have anything to do with it."

He commented he had wanted to open a consulting service "for some time."

Haney, a native of Ohio, became director of the department of lay ministries of the commission March 1, 1974, leaving Heritage Baptist Church in Annapolis, Md., to join the agency. He is a former pastor of churches in Kentucky and Ohio.

(Martin is BP news editor.)

Following the intense look at statistics and plans, SBC Sunday School Board President Grady C. Cothen warned the Baptist mission leaders against looking only at numbers, challenging them instead to see people in need and in spiritual poverty.

Statistics are only numerical illustrations of human misery, Cothen said. "We are not talking about trends; we are talking about human beings suffering spiritual misery because they've got their lives all mixed up."

Cothen said that Satan is doing everything he can to thwart Bold Mission Thrust. "He is dividing the churches. He is confusing the denomination, he has attacked every facet of Bold Mission Thrust."

In the conference's opening address, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary President William Pinson warned that Bold Mission Thrust will be costly, for it will require Baptists to struggle with controversy and sacrifice time, money and comfort.

Bold Mission Thrust will be throttled until Baptists learn the Bible teaches Christians must save all they can from what they earn so they can give all they can to world missions, Pinson said.

The conference was jointly sponsored by the SBC Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board, Women's Missionary Union and Brotherhood Commission.

(Newton is HMB news editor.)

High attendance

On Oct. 4, High Attendance Day in Mississippi Baptist churches, a reported 196,548 were in attendance in Mississippi Sunday Schools. Another 80,149 persons were reported to have attended Mississippi Church Training programs that day.

Simpson votes benevolence plan

Simpson Baptist Association at their Annual meeting Oct. 20, voted to establish a benevolence fund to be used to pay supply for a church whose minister is forced to vacate his responsibility because of illness.

The disbursements of the fund will be handled by the association missions committee. The missions committee was authorized to draw up the guidelines which are as follows:

1. Each church would be invited to contribute \$25 per year to a benevolence fund.

2. Upon request by church supply money would be paid in the event the staff is forced to vacate his responsibility because of illness, provided the church would continue his/her salary during this period of time.

3. There will be a limit of a 6 months per illness.

4. Only churches participating may draw from the fund.

5. This contribution would be invested in a separate fund in the event that it is not used it would accumulate interest.

6. The amount of honorarium given for supply would be \$50 per week and would be the same amount regardless of the size of the church.

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Art teacher

Lucile Parker, instructor at William Carey College, Hattiesburg, Miss., taught the afternoon art class during one of the senior adult Chautauquas held at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center. The tenth anniversary of the Chautauquas is being celebrated this year. More than 8,000 senior adults are expected to attend the nine scheduled conferences. Three busloads totaling 120 Mississippi Baptists, attended one of the Chautauquas, led by Kermit King of the Church Training Department.

(Photo by Gail Rothwell.)

Brotherhood consolidates

(Continued from page 1)

tees, agency staff members, and state Brotherhood leaders, was instructed to meet twice annually with concerned Baptist laymen to identify concerns and develop ways to involve lay people.

Trustees heard a progress report for constructing the Glendon McCullough Conference Center and agency offices and empowered a building committee to proceed with construction within budget limitations of \$160,000.

Haney, who said he will direct a national church renewal and church

Education leaders told: operate in the sunshine

By Rex Hammock

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Christian education, praised during a two-day workshop for Baptist state convention and education executives, is being threatened by legal developments, said an attorney during the same workshop.

Nashville attorney James Guenther told workshop participants, which included state Baptist convention executive secretaries and chairpersons of state education commissions or committees, that Christian colleges have been in the "front lines of (church-state) legal battles in the past few years."

With the passage of certain federal laws and the adoption of guidelines specifically the National Labor Relations Act and civil rights legislation—there has been a proliferation of suits by faculty and staff members "when colleges do not hire, fire or grant tenure as they want," said Guenther.

As the age of majority has been lowered to 18 in most states, the "old role of the college as absentee parent" also has changed, said Guenther. Student consumerism has increased and today "the college catalog serves as a contractual relationship between college and student."

Guenther, legal counsel for both the Education Commission and the SBC Executive Committee, said that many

legal questions Baptist colleges have faced now confront other Baptist institutions and will probably affect local churches in the future.

Guenther advised those interested in legal issues facing Baptists to watch developments in certain specific areas:

—Legal decisions concerning the question of ascending liability; specifically cases which address the question, "Is a parent organization of a religious body also liable in suits brought against a subsidiary agency?"

—A case against Bob Jones University, an independent religious school in South Carolina, which will answer the question of the federal government's right to take away the tax exempt status of a religious institution if the institution has a policy contrary to government guidelines—in this case, civil rights guidelines.

—Shock waves of suspensions concerning church wealth if Roman Catholic Cardinal Cody of Chicago is indicated and prosecuted for misuse of church funds.

To avoid legal problems, Guenther advised Baptist executives, college administrators and church leaders to "operate in the sunshine—say what you mean and mean what you say."

(Hammock writes for the Education Commission.)

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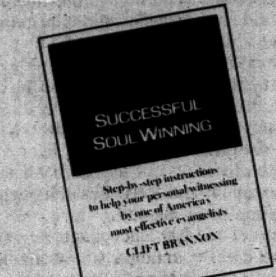
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Front door discipline cited as one back door solution

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greatly improve the quality of ministry, he noted. "I preach and teach that if you want to worship and serve God here, we want you. If you just want your name on the roll, we don't want you," said Marsh, who talks with each new Christian about their responsibilities before they are baptized. "As a result I think the quality of our members is higher."

North Phoenix instituted the Encourager program in 1980 to provide person-to-person assistance to new Christians.

When a person makes a public decision to accept Christ, he or she is given a copy of the Survival Kit for New Christians to study and is assigned an encourager who is an active member of the Bible study department to which the new person is assigned.

Each of the 900 Encouragers now participating in the program have participated in a one-hour training program and their role to answer questions, provide support and help the new Christian become involved in the total church program—Bible study, training, visitation and worship.

Minister of Outreach Uri Utterback who administers the Encourager program, said, "I really feel it's a positive approach to the new Christian. It enables them to find new directions in getting involved in the church and to see that through the church there is an alternative to the world."

Uutterback noted that being an Encourager also has helped many long-time members to become more active in

the total church program.

As general guidelines for helping new Christians, Edgemont suggested planning a training program based on the needs of the church and giving increased emphasis to the value of church membership.

"We communicate that membership is of no value because we don't train new converts in who they are," said Edgemont. "We need to start re-emphasizing the priesthood of the believer: one, God is no respector of persons; two, we all have equal access to God; and three, we've all been called to ministry."

Also, Edgemont said, a church should establish and communicate to new Christians its expectations of church members.

"Every new Christian should be expected to take some kind of training, such as working through the Survival Kit," he said. "Adult, youth and children's editions are produced by the church training department. This can be the first step toward a disciplined life."

And, he noted, new converts should be expected to engage in continued training and to find a place of ministry. Then, if someone becomes inactive, "there should be an intensive plan for meeting their needs and getting them involved again."

"We should not be satisfied with the inactivity of our members," he said.

(Linda Lawson writes for the Sunday School Board.)



National Baptist scholarships

The Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention grants scholarship aid to 27 students in the amount of \$65,000 each year. Shown above are four National Baptist scholarship recipients who will attend New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary this year. They are (left to right) Charles Hines, Natchez, Hubert Tate, Jackson, Mary Ann Bogan, of Columbia, and Doug Taylor, Leakesville. Making the presentation is Richard Brogan, left, president of Mississippi Baptist Seminary. Paul Stevens, who serves as vice president for student affairs at New Orleans Seminary, is at the right. Besides heading the MBS, Brogan as a Home Mission Board missionary, directs black church relations in Mississippi.

Consensus on missions . . .

(Continued from page 1)

sionaries to be at work in Guadeloupe, as well as the capital to repair buildings and build new ones. After seeing the extremely high cost of building materials in Pointe-A-Pitre, each man realized the importance of sacrificing at home to support these two avenues of mission assistance.

As the airplane departed this Caribbean island, each man

looked to see the shining rooftop below—a visible witness of a group of Mississippi Baptists experiencing foreign missions firsthand.

Men participating on the trip were: Warren Dunn, student activities director at the University of Southern Mississippi; Ken Gower, U.S. Air Force, retired; Glenn Hobgood, social security claims adjuster; Sam McClelland, farmer; Terry McWhorter, department store manager; Bobby Spiers, postmaster, United States Postal Service; and Ron Surber.

(Ron L. Surber is minister of education at Temple Church, Hattiesburg.)

Bruce deacon, newspaperman, dies in crash

Funeral services for Sellers V. Denley, founder of The Calhoun County Journal at Bruce were held Oct. 28 at First Baptist Church, Bruce, where Denley was a lifetime deacon and had taught an older adult men's Sunday School class for almost 28 years. Charles Nestor, Bruce pastor, officiated.

Denley, 76, died early Oct. 27, from injuries sustained Monday night, Oct. 26, when the automobile in which he was a passenger collided with another.

Selma Bryant, mayor of Bruce and brother of Hollis Bryant, consultant in the Cooperative Missions department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, is in intensive care in the North Mississippi Medical Center at Tupelo suffering from multiple injuries. Ervin Bulard, Pittsboro mayor, who was driving, is also in the Tupelo hospital, with severe injuries.

The men were returning from a 3-Rivers Planning meeting at Smithville when the crash occurred at the intersection of Highways 45 and 278 eight miles west of Amory. The driver of the other vehicle, Mrs. Helen King from Aberdeen, was also reported to be in critical condition.

Denley, born Jan. 3, 1905, in Coffeeville, was associated with the Coffeeville Courier from early boyhood until 1946. In August 1953 he founded The Journal and served as editor until 1971. Since that time he has been active as a columnist and in production of the newspaper. He served one term in the state legislature in the early 1940's.

Survivors include his wife, Maggie Ellen Denley, and one son, S. Gale Denley, both of Bruce; two brothers; three sisters; three grandchildren; and one great-grandson.

Preschool care to be available at convention

Preschool care will be available for children, ages birth through five, at First Baptist Church, Jackson, during the Mississippi Baptist Convention, Nov. 9-11. The Preschool departments are located on the street level off President Street. Signs point the way.

Hours will be listed in the daily bulletin to be distributed during the convention.

The following are procedures to be followed: Register, giving the names of the child or children, the parents and the church. Be sure all belongings are labeled. In the case of infants, leave a time schedule for feeding.

Leave the children no earlier than 20 minutes before the beginning of a session and pick them up no later than 15 minutes after the close of the sessions.

Children may stay through the noon meal if parents provide food—baby food or sack lunch. The Preschool Staff will serve the children the noon meal only. Children must be picked up for the supper meal, as the Preschool will close between 4:30 and 6:30 p.m.

Get Southwestern tickets Monday

The cost of the Southwestern Seminary alumni luncheon will be \$6. Tickets MUST be bought, or if already paid for, picked up before 5 p.m., Monday, Nov. 9, in the display area of the convention. The luncheon will be held Tuesday, Nov. 10, at noon at the Holiday Inn Downtown. Russell H. Dilday, president of Southwestern Seminary, will speak.

Retiring missionaries leave hearts overseas

By Bill Webb

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Retiring missionary Hazel Moon's ulcer almost kept her from becoming a missionary nurse to Nigeria.

At a recognition service in Richmond to honor her and 22 other retiring foreign missionaries, Moon recalled the verdict from the Foreign Mission Board 34 years ago: "We can't send you out but come on down and watch the others be appointed."

Then just an hour before the service years ago, several members of the board asked if she would be willing to go to Nigeria on the condition that she release the board of all responsibility should the ulcer trouble her.

The Virginian gladly accepted and just this year completed 34 years' service in Nigeria. "I knew God would take care of my stomach and he's still taking care of it," she told the audience of relatives, friends, Foreign Mission Board members and missionary candidates.

For the honored retirees—with 695 years combined missionary service—perhaps the toughest thing about serving Christ on foreign soil was having to stop.

Though most did not say it aloud, they seemed to agree with Ardis Cross, of Texas, who said, "The only difficult thing we had to do as missionaries was retire." She and her husband, Eugene, of Mississippi, served seven years in Hawaii (before it achieved statehood) and 27 years in the Philippines. He was not able to attend the service.

Cross had vowed to return to the Philippines after going there during World War II as an Army chaplain and helping secure the release of starving missionaries held captive by the Japanese. As it turned out, the Crosses' first assignment was to Japanese in Hawaii.

"It's good to have been a part of a big plan," Mary Frances Gould, of Kentucky, assured the audience. "I wish I were starting over, but I'm grateful

Autograph party to be held for McWilliams, Swor

An autograph party will be held for Anne Washburn McWilliams and Chester Swor, Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 10, 2-4 p.m. at First Church, Jackson.

The two will be autographing their recent Broadman books at the Baptist Book Store display. McWilliams wrote *David Gomes: When Faith Triumphs*. Swor wrote *The Best of Chester Swor*.

Mrs. McWilliams, of Clinton, is editorial associate, *Baptist Record*. Swor, of Jackson, travels widely as a lecturer and counselor.

Forrest avenue to dedicate sanctuary

Forrest Avenue Baptist Church, 701 Forrest Avenue, Biloxi, will dedicate its new sanctuary on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 15, at 2 p.m.

Blue Mountain ministerial alumni dinner: Nov. 10

Blue Mountain College's Ministerial Alumni will gather for a dinner meeting during the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Jim Futral, pastor at First Baptist Church, Amory, will be the guest speaker.

The dinner will be held at Calvary Church, Jackson, at 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 10. Tickets will cost \$5, and may be obtained during the time of the convention from Bruce Cappleman, vice-president of the alumni association.

Drumwright, Arkansas executive, dies at 57

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)—

Huber L. Drumwright Jr., 57, executive secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, died at 1 a.m. Nov. 2 after suffering an apparent heart attack.

Drumwright preached Sunday (Nov. 1) at First Baptist Church of El Dorado, Ark.

Drumwright had experienced chest pains during the afternoon. However, he preached the evening service.

He and his wife, Minette, returned to their home, where he had severe pains about 11 p.m. Little Rock Fire Department paramedics were summoned and efforts were made to resuscitate him for nearly an hour.

He was taken to Baptist Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead at 1 a.m., after further efforts to

revive him were unsuccessful.

Drumwright became executive of the Arkansas convention May 30, 1980, after 28 years on the faculty of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, seven as dean of the school of theology. He was professor of New Testament.

He was born in Walters, Okla., and a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Seminary. He had done post doctoral work at Princeton Seminary and the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece.

Survivors include his wife, Minette; two daughters, Minette Evelyn and Debra Day, both of Waco, and a sister, Mrs. Ruby Pulley of Dallas.

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 3

Thursday, November 5, 1981

FACULTY VACANCY
Professor needed to teach graduate and undergraduate courses in finance, money and banking, and other areas of expertise at central campus and regional campuses. Will serve on faculty committees and other assigned tasks. As a Baptist university Wayland is seeking Christian professors who uphold an evangelical approach to life.

Qualifications: Ph.D. or DBA in Business Administration. **Salary:** Negotiable, depending on qualifications. **Position Available:** Fall 1982.

Contact: Dr. Glenn Dod, chairperson; Business Administration Search Committee; Wayland Baptist University; Plainview, TX 79072; (806) 296-5521.

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(Continued from page 1)

ends on Monday. "This will average itself out, however," he noted: "and 1981 should far surpass any other in Cooperative Program gifts for missions from the churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention." "We must spread the gospel," he said, "and for most of us the only way we can extend our witness beyond our own communities is through our monetary gifts."

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED NOW!

As The 1982 World's Fair in Knoxville approaches (May - October 1982) many Baptists are asking, "How can I help with our Baptist witness?"

You can help reach millions of Fair visitors with the Christian message by ordering your World's Fair tickets now through Baptist Ministries for The 1982 World's Fair. Part of every ticket purchase goes toward completion of the Baptist Pavilion at the Fair.

But hurry! Prices for season passes increase soon. Your money is also needed now to carry out plans for the Baptist Pavilion, and the musical and multi-media presentations which will proclaim the Christian message and touch the lives of millions!

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Adult Season Passes @ \$60* each
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Total tax is included.

 Check or Money Order enclosed (payable to Baptist Ministries) No cash please
Mail ticket to: (please print)
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Street Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Send order form to: Baptist Ministries for The 1982 World's Fair
P.O. Box 1086, Knoxville, Tennessee 37901
For additional information call: (615) 688-5377
A Season Pass is good for unlimited visits to The 1982 World's Fair including any day, anytime admission. (There will be a separate charge for individual amusement rides.) All prices, policies and programs subject to change without notice. © 1981 KLE

“

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— W. A. Criswell, Pastor
First Baptist Church
Dallas, Texas

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Editorials

South American Baptists . . .

Beautiful people of the Rio de la Plata

Mississippi Partners with the Rio de la Plata (River of Silver) and Bold Mission Thrust will be the emphases on Monday evening of the Mississippi Baptist Convention next week.

The Rio de la Plata is the term used to designate the three-nation area to which Mississippi Baptists are relating in a Bold Mission endeavor in South America. The three nations are Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina; and the Rio de la Plata is the major waterway of the area. It is formed by the confluence of the Uruguay and Parana rivers and flows into the Atlantic Ocean between Montevideo, Uruguay, and Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Rio de la Plata is so wide at that point that it appears from the air to be a bay.

The Parana River separates Paraguay from Brazil and flows into Argentina. The beautiful Iguazu Falls are on the Parana River between Paraguay and Brazil, and near there a tremendous dam is under construction as a future source of power.

Carrying out a Bold Mission endeavor of their own in that beautiful area are the members of the Santamaría family of San Juan, Argentina. The San Juan area has been called the California of Argentina because of its resemblance to the San Joaquin Valley of California.

Jose Santamaría is perhaps the most influential layman in the San Juan area, and he is president (or moderator) of the Baptist association for that area. Jose's father was the first of the Santamarías to become a Baptist, and he did so soon after he arrived in Argentina from Sicily just before World War I. Now there are 62 direct descendants of that elder Santamaría, and every one is involved actively in Baptist work in Argentina.

Four of the elder Santamaría's children are still living. There are in addition 24 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren. Jose has three daughters, and all are involved in the work of a mission congregation. One plans seminary study. Though I was not aware of the connection at the time because of a language barrier, I spent the night in San Jose with a sister of Jose Santamaría and her husband. They are Ruth and Rafael Albornoz.

They have two children, 11 and 14 years of age, and all are members of the First Baptist Church in San Jose. Rafael is the secretary of the association.

Rafael was a staunch Catholic when he and Ruth were married. One day he was standing outside a Baptist church when a meeting was going on. Jose came along and grabbed his hand and said, "Let's go in." "He hasn't left the

church since," Jose exclaims. Rafael now has been a Baptist five years.

The elder Santamaría was 17 when he first arrived in Argentina from Italy. He was poor, and he came to help his family financially. He was a staunch Catholic, but after he had been in Argentina for awhile he became sad because he had left his family behind.

One Sunday he was walking along and passed an evangelical church where there was singing. He went in, and at the end everyone expressed a welcome. He felt that the people were filled with love and that they liked him. He felt a such relationship as he had with his family in Sicily. He was moved by the experience and walked away and cried.

A few Sundays later he made a profession of faith and was baptized. He said he became a new person. He wanted to go back to Sicily. This was in 1914, but he didn't know about World War I because he couldn't read Spanish. He went back, was drafted, and was sent to the front. The Argentine church kept in contact with him.

One day at the front the cook of his outfit was killed, and he became the cook. He felt the Lord was in this way saving him from being killed in battle. Later, however, everyone in the kitchen area was either wounded or killed, and Santamaría was sent to a hospital. "Lord, you've saved me again," he said. His three brothers were killed in battle, and another died shortly after of disease.

He was married after the war and had four children born in Italy. He wouldn't let his children be Catholics, but he found that the children's grandmother had sneaked one to a Catholic church. Five days later he left with his family to go to Argentina, though the parting with relatives in Italy was a sad encounter. He missed the boat to Argentina, however, because of a missing document; and he had to return for it. When he finally arrived in Buenos Aires he found that the ship he was scheduled to take had sunk, and all aboard lost their lives. "I've been saved a third time," he said, "and I've got something special to share with the world." He told his children that he didn't want to leave

them material things but rather wanted to leave them the spiritual blessings of Christ. The elder Santamaría died in 1965.

All of his descendants have become church leaders. One of Jose's brothers was lay pastor of First Baptist Church in San Jose for three years before his death.

For 20 years Jose was director of the Sunday School for First Baptist Church. His education came from Sunday School, he said. He studied Sunday School enlargement in order to facilitate Sunday School growth. He had been treasurer and had been on every committee of the church.

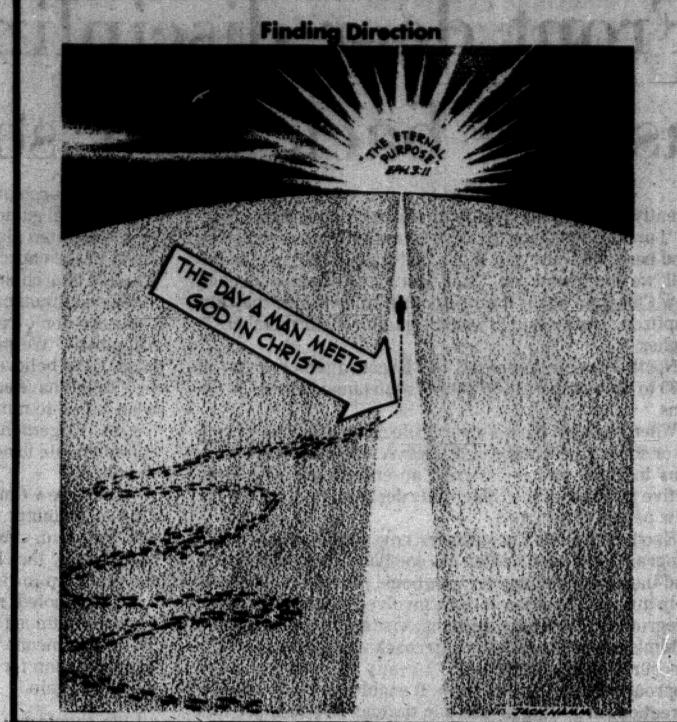
One day one of his daughters took him to a mission out of town, and he decided to help start a new work. He became the lay pastor. He led the members to build a chapel out of native stone, and they are hoping for a full-time pastor soon. The mission has grown in 2½ years to 120. The majority are children. Jose, his wife, their three daughters, and a future son-in-law go out to work in the mission. "We have grown spiritually," Jose said. "The Lord gives us more than we give him."

Jose is in the export business, but he never lets his business get ahead of the Lord's work. One-half of his time goes into the business and one-half into the Lord's work, he said.

The Santamarías are representative of the beautiful people who are the Baptists of the Rio de la Plata. They are energetic, they are organized, and they are at work. Jose Santamaría tells of one who amazed even him. The man led seven other men to Christ who were in jail. When the seven arrived at the church to be baptized, they were accompanied by an armed police guard. This created a stir with the neighbors, Jose indicated.

Jose Santamaría was right. The Lord gives us more than we give him. And those who are to be involved in volunteer work in the Rio de la Plata will be blessed in a greater way than expected because of it. This will be the testimony of Mary and Perry Sanderford and Maurice Flowers during the session on Monday evening.

They know. They have been there.—DTM



Letters to the Editor

Letters to prisoners

Editor:

In reference to Mr. Aqeel's (prisoner in Ohio reformatory) Oct. 15 letter to Baptist Record:

Thanks for printing his letter, for in my ministry I have found that the men and women behind bars are not only crying out for companions-by-mail, they are crying out loudly for "the story of Jesus—our blessed Savior."

A few weeks ago, I was in a cell in Washington County (Greenville) and praise God, what did I see on the walls? There was only one dirty phrase, but the ones that blessed my heart were "Jesus is the way," "The Lord is my Shepherd," "Jesus loves you," and others.

The saddest one of all was "God help you poor children." Yes, these wretched souls are hungry for the Gospel. At present, Victory in Jesus is in urgent need of 200 inexpensive Bibles.

Thanks for allowing me to share this need with the readers.

Clark Williams, evangelist and director

Victory in Jesus

P. O. Box 801
West Point, MS 39773

This letter presents the other side of the picture as compared with the front page editorial in last week's issue of the Baptist Record. We wholeheartedly support a ministry to prisoners which would include a letter writing witness. We repeat, however, that letter writing needs to be conducted with

extreme caution because there are a few prisoners who might create a problem for those who would appreciate and profit by such an experience.—Editor.

A time with want

Editor:

Thank you for your concise and responsible editorial expression, "World Hunger . . . Baptists Beginning to Awaken."

The Spirit of God is continuing to convict and inform us in such a way that the fight against world hunger is beginning to be interpreted as an essential dimension of our calling to evangelism. Fastly approaching is the day when the hunger concern, along with missions and religious liberty, will be an integral distinctive in the Southern Baptist identity.

We can rest assured that every last penny given for hunger relief through the Foreign Mission Board (P. O. Box 6597, Richmond, VA 23230) will be directly used to aid hungry people. We may feel free in asking this agency for a complete breakdown on how our contribution will be distributed.

Southern Seminary president Duke McCall has poignantly summarized our current situation by noting that we Americans have "lost the war on poverty" and "must negotiate a truce with want."

The moment for that truce is now.

Charles Johnson

Box 776

Southern Baptist Seminary

Louisville, KY 40280

Faces And Places

Two at Bellevue

the people around him. Beside ministry to his own church, he goes to nearby Parchman on Thursday evenings to preach in prison camps. Twice a month he leads services at the Oak Grove Nursing Home at Duncan (churches of Bolivar Association take turns). He directs two children's softball teams. Shelby Christian Women, one of three Bible study groups started by Bellevue members, now reaches businesswomen from all churches in town.

Mrs. Wade, in her sweet, quiet way, gave me a guided tour of the church, with reserved—but certainly deserved—pride. White tile floors were shining clean. She had waxed them. Sunday School rooms appeared neat. She had dusted them, and straightened the furniture. The sanctuary seemed to say, "Welcome." She had vacuumed the carpet. Though hampered by arthritis, this 75-year-old widow, a retired school teacher of fourth grade, has appointed herself the church janitor, without pay (monetary pay, anyway).

In Sunday School, Mrs. Wade teaches the adult women. Mrs. Hester, a member of her class, told me, "She goes to church every time the doors are open. She picks up some widows who have no transportation to church, and she also takes some shopping, and she visits shut-ins of all denominations. Her

Sunday School class honored her last year with a special mission offering given in her name."

Her Sunday School class does not sit in stiff rows, but in a circle around a table (loaned by a member). Always she precedes the lesson by asking for sentence prayers around the table. She has travelled over the United States many times. Her father, the late Bob Ming, was born in the Mississippi Delta. Her mother, who moved to Mississippi from Tennessee, was a brilliant artist, I've heard. I have never seen any of her mother's paintings, but I've seen the handiwork of Roberta, where she used a mop for a brush, and tile for canvas. She allows the Master Artist to use her to create beauty in her church and in lives of those around her.



Jose Santamaría, left, pauses for a break with San Juan, Argentina, pastor Sambrano, center, and Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, during a tour of the San Juan area.

Guest opinion . . .

Witnessing

By Guy Henderson

Attitudes are wondrous to behold! Could anything be more personal than personal witnessing? What business is it of yours if I believe or not, have accepted Christ or not, attend church or not? It's my life—just let me do my own thing! Attitude one in the fast lane.

Then, there is the attitude so aptly illustrated by John Vassar. At a dinner party one evening a society lady pointed him out to her husband and said, "That man over there, he asked me if I were a Christian." "I hope you told him to mind his own business," replied the husband. "Oh, if you could have heard him, you would have known! That is his business." John Vassar, like hundreds today, believed it was his business. Attitude two;

Scriptural, but possessed by so few. As always, the larger group has the attitude of 'so what.' Indifference dogs the steps of so many believers today. The chilling spirit of Psalm 142:4 is felt: "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul." Is it the fireman's business when he sees a house on fire? Can the seafarer ignore the frantic cry of a drowning person? The child of God has discovered the rock of all ages in the midst of a stormy pilgrimage. Can we remain silent?

The biggest enemy of effective witnessing is fear. Fear of failure, of what others will say, or even what our friends will think. From whence cometh this fear? Not from God for we read that God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, love, and a sound mind or self control. Thus the fear is of satanic origin. When we fail to witness we are obeying the devil.

But how can I do this? I'm so slow of speech, or timid, or I just don't know what to say. I listened to a man tell of a recent operation. It had happened to him, and it was real. Just yesterday I talked with a man who had been a POW and then suddenly released. Both expressed themselves so well. Can we not share with another the most marvelous experience of our life? Your own personal testimony is some of the best witnessing.

Helping tools can be found in the use of gospel tracts or booklets such as "How To Have A Full and Meaningful Life" or the "Four Spiritual Laws." Some find it effective to take a Bible

and walk the Roman road with an unsaved friend. Evangelism Explosion and Continuous Witness Training (CWT) are excellent training programs emphasizing prayer partners and a continuing effort. The old farmer expressed it accurately when he said, "I ain't farming now half as good as I know how." Our need is not so much better methods, but determined men.

Gary Player has a sign in his office "God loathes mediocrity" which he interprets by saying, "God says if you're going to keep company with me, don't embarrass me." Paul the apostle said, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord. . ." If it has happened to you, TELL IT!

Guy Henderson is director of the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

led the headmaster and me to give Cliff that much-needed second chance!

Mrs. Max B. Graham is a resident of Independence.

FCC powerless to prevent ban on religious programs

Asked specifically about the case of television station KVIA-TV in El Paso, Texas, whose owner recently announced a policy banning paid religious programming from the ABC affiliate, the FCC's Martin Blumenthal confirmed that the agency has no legal or regulatory power to reverse such a decision.

Blumenthal, acting chief of the policy and rules division, said that although existing law includes a "general public interest requirement that programming be designed to serve the

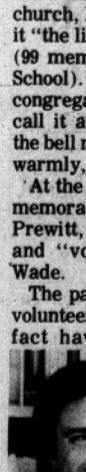
community," it does not require making air time available to "any particular group" within the community.

Congress is currently considering a number of changes in broadcast law, including repeal of the "fairness doctrine" and the "equal time" requirements. The fairness doctrine requires broadcasters to air differing viewpoints on controversial subjects, while the equal time provision requires that air time be made available to competing candidates for public office.

Book Reviews

THE BEST OF CHESTER SWOR by Chester E. Swor (Broadman, paper, 217 pp., paper \$4.95). "How do you describe a sunrise over Mount Fujiyama? Or the surf at Waikiki? Or the snow in the Alps? You may try—innumerable people do—but you'll never quite be able to make it, not to your satisfaction, anyhow." That's the way the editorial staff of this book say they feel about Chester Swor. This book contains selections from Swor's best-selling Broadman books. Very

Truly Yours, If We Dared! Neither Down Nor Out, The Parent Slant, and Youth at Bat. There are chapters on a variety of subjects to challenge all ages. Swor, a Mississippian, lives in Jackson. In the past 45 years he has traveled more than a million miles, lecturing and counseling on college campuses. His writing is like his speaking—sharp and clean-cut, straight to the point, full of anecdotes, beautifully expressive, making use of his extensive vocabulary.—AWM



Carl Prewitt

East Africa. His degree from Mississippi State was in farm management, and he hopes to combine agricultural missions with a preaching ministry.

Prewitt, a native of Bolivar County, had been a member of Bellevue before he accepted the pastorate there 4½ years ago. He began his seminary studies in New Orleans, but after the church on the edge of Shelby called him he transferred to Mid-America because it was so much nearer his work. He and his wife have a year-old adopted son, Matthew.

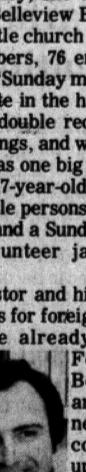
I could not resist asking if he is kin to

Cheryl Prewitt Blackwood, the former

Miss America, and he said, "Yes, distant kin."

As I would expect of a mission volun-

teer, he is involved in reaching out to



Roberta Wade

Sunday School class honored her last

year with a special mission offering

given in her name."

Her Sunday School class does not sit

in stiff rows, but in a circle around a

table (loaned by a member).

Always

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She has travelled over the United States

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Ming, was born in the Mississippi Delta.

Her mother, who moved to Mississipp

issippi from Tennessee, was a brilliant

artist, I've heard. I have never seen

any of her mother's paintings, but I've

seen the handiwork of Roberta, where

she used a

Bible Book Series

The King interprets the law

By Lewis Sewell, pastor,
First, Oxford
Matthew 5:17-48

In this lesson Jesus challenged his followers to a new way of life by elevating the moral and spiritual demands of the Law. Jesus asserts the Christian ideal is immeasurably higher than the Jewish. The Christian way of life excludes all degrees of sin, even in thought and feeling, whereas the old ideal excluded only acts, and only those acts which were specified as prohibited by the Law. This higher principle is illustrated in respect to murder (21-26), adultery (27-30), divorce (31, 32), oaths (33-37), retaliation (38-42), love of others (43-47), and is summed up as a law of perfection (48).

I. Fulfilling the Law (5:17-20).

These verses give the general principle of the Messiah's relation to the Law—"not destruction, but fulfillment." It was a rabbinical principle that some authority must confirm the dictum of every teacher, the authority either of some previous teacher or of the Torah interpreted according to rule. No teacher must base his teaching simply on his own authority. That Jesus did was one of the grievances against him. Jesus was conscious of possessing this supreme authority.

What does Jesus mean by "fulfilling the Law?" He does not mean taking the written law as it stands, and literally obeying it. That is what he condemns, not as wrong, but as wholly inadequate. He means, rather, starting with it as it stands, and bring it on to completeness; working out the spirit of it; getting at the comprehensive principles which underlie the narrowness of the letter.

Jesus sets forth these principles as the essence of the revelation made by God through the law and the prophets. Through them God has revealed his will, and it is impossible that his Son should attempt to pull down or undo this revelation of the Father's will, or that his will should fall short of fulfillment.

In verse 19 Jesus indicates that not until the whole of the divine purpose has been accomplished can the smallest expression of the divine will be abolished. The one who prematurely relaxes the hold which one of these minor enactments has on the conscience will be the worse for it. The guilty party will not be expelled from the Kingdom, but his place in it will be less glorious. In short, he will lose some of the joy of his salvation.

The "jot and tittle" of verse 18 is a use of the grammatical signs to express a truth. The "jot" was a small letter, in fact the smallest, called iota. The "tittle" was similar to a comma. Jesus uses a phrase to say neither the smallest letter nor the least significant sign, not just of the written law, of the principle of the law can be disregarded.

The scribes were the trained theologians of Israel. The Pharisees were the religious world of Israel. They represented that element of the Jewish people with which a religious teacher might have been expected to be in harmony. But Jesus pointed out that a follower of the principle of the law had a righteousness that exceeded the righteousness of scribes and Pharisees, who were concerned about the letter of the law only (v. 20). Righteousness is literally being put in right standing with God. Here, I think, is an allusion to the life lived as a result of being in right standing with God.

II. The Danger of Anger (5:21-26).

This first illustration of the contrast between the Christian life and the Jewish ideal is taken from the sixth commandment. Jesus used "You have heard that it was said" because he spoke to a crowd where most could neither read or write. Therefore, their knowledge of the law came from public instruction in the synagogues where the letter of the law was faithfully read, but the spirit of it frequently missed or obscured. Jesus' principle goes deeper than the law, and is more in keeping with the will of the Father.

III. The Danger of Lust (5:27-30).

This second illustration of the contrast between the Christian life and the Jewish ideal is taken from the seventh commandment. This commandment protected the sanctity of marriage and the peace of married life. But Jesus, while confirming this, again sets his own standard of purity beside the old one, and intimates that his standard is the true spirit of the old commandments.

It is not enough to abstain from having one's neighbor's wife. To lust after her, or any woman, is a breach of the commandment. Not only is social purity binding on both the married and the unmarried, whether male or female, but purity of heart is absolutely indispensable for real joy of salvation in the Kingdom.

The reference to the sacrifice of an eye or hand if it offends is symbolic. This is Jesus' way of saying that no sacrifice is too great if it is the only

way of securing the necessary cleanliness of thought and will.

IV. The Sanctity of Marriage (5:31-32).

The third illustration is taken from the question of divorce. In verse 31 Jesus quotes Deut. 24:1 not to contradict it, nor to deny its validity, but because it was a passage which some of the Pharisees were accustomed to quote in order to justify a much laxer attitude to divorce than was here permitted.

The subject of divorce is so complex that there are various interpretations to this passage and to the fuller statement of Jesus in Matthew 19:3-9. Space here permits only a general statement that Jesus did not disallow the law which permitted divorce when the husband found "something unseemly" in his wife, but he condemns the lax interpretation of these words that was often given.

V. The Importance of Integrity (5:33-37).

The fourth illustration is on the subject of oaths. In this area Jesus simply opposed Jewish tradition. No oaths ought to be used because a man's word ought to be enough.

VI. The Christian Reaction to Evil (5:38-42) and the Christian Practice of Love (5:43-48).

Jesus gives five examples of how the disciple should react to unfair or unreasonable treatment—physical violence, litigation, forced service, demand for gifts of money or property, and demands for loans. Live by the high standard of the spirit of the law.

To some men, sins are like old neckties. The longer they have them, the dearer they become.

Type errors cloud lesson meaning

The typographical errors that finally make their way to the printed page many times are more devastating than their fellow errors that are found out before making their way into print.

Such was the case with the Uniform Lesson commentary two weeks ago. Two errors in the third column of the commentary titled "The key to the kingdom" left the meaning of the passages questionable.

The fifth paragraph of the third column read:

Now that Nicodemus has been clearly taught not only that entrance into the kingdom required birth from above but also how new birth was pos-

Staff Changes

Stan Weatherford has resigned as pastor of Spring Hill Church, Copiah County, and has accepted a call to Garden City Church, Crestview, Fla. Jim Phillips, senior at Mississippi College, is serving Spring Hill as interim pastor.

David Luce is the new pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Mississippi Association. He comes to the state from the pastorate of Montpelier Baptist Church, Amite, La.

He earned the master of religious education degree from New Orleans Seminary and the doctor of ministry degree from Luther Rice Seminary. David and his wife Peggy have two children.



J. Wilbur Hall has been called as pastor by Foxworth First Church, Marion County. He goes from Pleasant Hill Church, Quitman. Hall received a B.A. from Mississippi College and Th.M. from New Orleans Seminary. He is pictured here with his wife, the former Betty Jean Fairley, and children (from left) Jody, Amanda, and James.

First Church, Lyman held a welcoming service for its new pastor, Delton Beall, and his family on Sunday night, Oct. 4. The Bealls, native Mississippians, moved back to the state from Texas.

William Hodge is the new pastor of Hopewell Baptist Church, Yalobusha County.

The word "Jews," of course, should have been "Jesus."

The next to last paragraph read: Nicodemus came to Jesus at night (3:2). Perhaps the night symbolized his ignorance of the gospel. He came to the light. He understood the gospel because he left the presence of Jesus.

The word "because" should have been "before."

There will never be a perfect copy of a newspaper, but we regret the inclusion of these two words used in error.

—DTM



Roseland Park dedicates building

Roseland Park Baptist Church, Picayune, dedicated to God its new 8,000 square foot education building Sunday, Oct. 18. The building includes 18 classrooms, a library/conference room, large music room, office space, and restrooms. Activities of the day included dinner-on-the-ground, special music, ribbon cutting, dedicatory

prayer, and open house. Left to right: Denise Frierson; Ronnie Nelson, minister of music and special ministries; Henry Burke, Building Committee member; Belton Watts, chairman of Building Committee; Buford Frierson, church treasurer; Steve Stone, minister of education and youth; and Danielle Frierson.

Devotional

Set your mind straight

By Harry L. Luceanay, pastor, Temple, Hattiesburg

"Life is a landscaping job. We are handed a site, ample or small, rugged or flat, picturesque or commonplace, whose general outlines and contours are largely determined for us. Both limitation and opportunity are involved in every site, and the most unforeseeable results ensue from the handling—some grand opportunities are muffed, and some utterly unpromising situations become notable. The basic elements in any personal site are bound to appear in the end no matter what is done with them, as a landscape still reveals its size and its major shapes and contours, whatever the landscape architect may do. These basic elements, however, are to be accepted, never as humiliations, commonly as limitations, but most of all as opportunities and even as incentives." (Harry Emerson Fosdick, *On Being a Real Person*, p. 69.)

Lucenay A man should seek to do the best he can with the life granted him by God. Many men suffer from poor mental pictures. Many churches suffer because the men in them have poor mental pictures. The author of Proverbs said, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7).

A man may stand 5 foot 2 1/4 inches tall like Napoleon and graduate 43rd in his class, and become a great military conqueror. A man may be frail physically, like Theodore Roosevelt, and learn to hunt lions. Or he may stammer with Demosthenes and practice speaking with pebbles in his mouth against the roar of the ocean until he becomes an orator. Every man has limitations to overcome. May each man remember the words of God which flowed through the pen of Paul: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Today pause to thank God for making you the way you are. Then ask him to give you the wisdom to discover the potential he has placed within you. Rise up as a child of God, a joint-heir with Jesus, and reach that potential through his grace and strength.

Life and Work Lesson

Power to overcome evil

By Joel E. Haire, pastor
First Church, Crystal Springs
Mark 5:2-10, 16-20

There is a question that seems to be ever before us. Some say that there is so much more evil today than there used to be. Others say that we just hear more about evil than we used to hear. Is there more today? It is difficult to measure the quantity. However, evil is as destructive as ever. Sometimes it seems to overwhelm us with its presence all around. Accounts of evil flood our local and national news broadcasts.

Law enforcement has been on the increase. New equipment is in use to combat evil forces. Yet evil seems to be gaining on us. We have not won the battle. Our own power has not been enough.

There is a power that can overcome evil. It is the same power that overcame evil in the life of the demon-possessed man living among the tombs. Jesus revealed this power when he encountered this man with an unclean spirit. Jesus' power is magnified as this man is identified.

I. The Evil of Demons Described (5:2-5)

The demon's dwelling place was in a man. His condition showed just how bad demon possession could be. Jesus didn't try to explain away his condition. He recognized it and dealt with him as a man possessed with demons.

We cannot open his life and fully see the inside, but the man possessed of demons must have had an indescribable struggle going on inside his life. It could have been no less than horrible.

Most of us know the discomfort of our own struggles with evil. There are the inside feelings that come with knowing we are doing something that is wrong. How much greater would be the horror of being totally possessed by evil. As Christians, we can be grateful that we will never have to experience what this man was going through.

The man's dwelling place was among the tombs. What was dwelling on the inside affected where he was dwelling on the outside. He couldn't dwell with his family, it wouldn't be safe for them. Nor could he dwell in the community of his acquaintances; they were afraid of him. Here was an outcast who could only dwell apart from life. In fact his life was more like death than life. His way was one of destruction.

There is a sense in which every sin-

wrecked life dwells among the tombs. There are the tombs of despair, loneliness, and hopelessness. This is the natural place for such a life, but not the best place. Even among the tombs there is hope when Jesus passes that way.

This demon-possessed man was beyond control. Others could not control him. He was apparently a source of worry to the surrounding area. People tried to bind him with chains, but he broke them.

Once evil takes over it is never easy to control. Evil can turn a nice, quiet community into a nightmare. It is never wise or safe to invite any type of evil into a community. Tax revenues and large profits may be promised. Yet evil in the final analysis always hurts a community.

Self-control was gone. His restlessness that drove him about the mountains and tombs was not the way of self-control. His loud cries were out of control. His self-inflicted cuts and pain painted the picture of a man who was about to destroy himself.

II. The Power of God Encountered (5:6-10)

Jesus' presence brought the demons and this man to the very feet of Jesus. A power that had so possessed this man and defeated those who tried to control him was now rendered helpless before the power of God.

Christians can live victorious lives when they realize that no matter how powerful evil is the power of God is greater. Defeat comes not from a lack of power, but from a failure to recognize and use the power that is available.

IV. The Message of Healing Praised (5:18-20)

The people rejected Jesus and their lives remained unchanged. This demon-possessed man was set free by Jesus. His life touched and changed by Jesus could never be the same again.

What a happy life it would be if this healed man could spend the rest of his days by the side of Jesus. However, Jesus had other plans in mind. Jesus wanted this man to go home to his family and friends as a witness. Jesus didn't heal him so that he could sit by Jesus' side. There was a work to be done, a message to be proclaimed.

Jesus has done something great for every Christian. There is a message to be shared. Home may be the greatest place in the world to share that message; yet it can be overlooked. If every Christian shared Jesus with family and friends there would be a tremendous impact on our land.

The man obeyed Jesus. He didn't argue or refuse. What joy must have come to his heart as he shared his message.

Jesus' power was victorious. He cast out the demons. The man was healed. You would think that everyone would be excited about such a great miracle. However, there were different reactions.

III. The Presence of Jesus Rejected (5:16-17)

An eyewitness report followed Jesus' great miracle. The report included what happened to the man and what happened to the swine. Apparently more emphasis was given to the swine than to the man. I get the feeling that the people might have been happier had the man died and the swine lived. This is the order of sin's priorities. When sin and selfishness take over, human life can lose its value.

There was an emphatic request from the people. They wanted Jesus to leave. They feared his power and didn't like the results of that power. Fitting Jesus into their kind of world was impossible. Neither did they want to fit into Jesus' kind of world. Therefore, they wanted Jesus out of their sight.

What could have been the greatest day in their lives turned into a tragedy for the people. The tragedy was not that they lost the swine. The real tragedy was that they lost Jesus. He was their only hope and only way to eternal life.

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Uniform Lesson

Strength for the struggle

By Jerry E. Oswalt, pastor
Second Avenue, Laurel
Romans 8:12-29

Clovis Chappell, a great Methodist pastor, frequently said, "Everybody is having a hard time." This assessment gave him the strong conviction that preaching ought to contain a much larger portion of encouragement than denunciation.

One of the most encouraging passages in all the Bible is our text for this lesson. It contains several sources of strength for the struggles of life.

I. We Are Strengthened by the Assurance that We Are His Children (12-16).

The word "spirit" is used twenty-one times in chapter eight of Romans. In most of those instances the word refers to the Holy Spirit of God. The Spirit is God's presence and power within believers.

The Spirit assures us that we are the children of God. One way that this assurance is given is that the Spirit enables us to overcome the desires of the flesh (13,14).

The word "flesh" is used by Paul in this passage to refer to human nature in all its sinful weaknesses. It is more than just the physical body. It is man's total being apart from Christ.

Another way that the Spirit assures us that we are the children of God is through the mystical union he provides between us and God. This union takes place through the process of spiritual adoption. This is Paul's equivalent of John's "begotten from above" (John